

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JULY 1, 2008  
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 17, 2008  
AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 20, 2008  
AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 6, 2008  
AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 22, 2008  
AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 27, 2008

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 1254**

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**Introduced by Senator Wyland**

February 15, 2008

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An act to add Section 51225.6 to the Education Code, relating to high school graduation curriculum.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1254, as amended, Wyland. Education: curriculum: ~~high school graduation requirements.~~

~~(1) Existing~~

*Existing* law requires the adopted course of study for grades 1 to 6, inclusive, and grades 7 to 12, inclusive, to include courses in the social sciences for the purpose of, among other things, providing pupils with a foundation for understanding the history, resources, development, and government of California and the United States of America. Existing law requires the State Board of Education to adopt basic instructional materials for use in kindergarten and grades 1 to 8, inclusive, and requires the Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials Commission to recommend curriculum frameworks to the state board.

This bill would ~~state that the Legislature encourages~~ *declare the Legislature's encouragement that* the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education ~~to~~ consider methods of enhancing pupil knowledge of, and pride in, United States history and our form of government and increasing civic participation. The bill would set forth methods that should be considered, including, among other things, developing new curriculum frameworks and, if necessary, standards; expanding the time; and ~~grades~~ *grade level* in which; American history and government are studied; and requiring a basic understanding of United States history in order to graduate from high school.

~~(2) Existing law, the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, requires each school district, charter school, and county office of education to administer a designated achievement test to each of its pupils in grades 2 to 11, inclusive. Pupils in grades 9 to 11, inclusive, are tested in core curriculum areas, including reading, writing, mathematics, history/social science, and science, except as specified.~~

~~Existing law requires each pupil completing grade 12 to satisfy certain requirements as a condition of receiving a diploma of graduation from high school including, but not limited to, successfully passing the high school exit examination and completing specified coursework.~~

~~This bill, in addition, would require a pupil, by the time of graduation from high school, to achieve a score at the basic performance level or above on the grade 11 history/social science test that is administered pursuant to the STAR Program in order to graduate from high school. To the extent that school districts would be required to provide a higher level of service in order for pupils to meet this additional graduation requirement, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.~~

~~(3) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.~~

~~This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.~~

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~yes~~*no*.  
State-mandated local program: ~~yes~~*no*.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1     SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the  
2 following:

3     (1) Over the last 20 years and more, studies have demonstrated  
4 that high school pupils have significantly less knowledge of  
5 American history and government than previous generations.

6     (2) Pupils and young adults ~~over this period~~ know significantly  
7 less about current events, subscribe at lower rates to newspapers  
8 and news periodicals, and vote at significantly lower rates than  
9 their elders.

10    (3) Pupils and young adults have diminishing faith, pride, and  
11 confidence in American government and its institutions.

12    (b) The Legislature encourages the Superintendent of Public  
13 Instruction and the State Board of Education to consider methods  
14 of accomplishing all of the following:

15     (1) Enhancing pupil knowledge of, and pride in, our history and  
16 form of government.

17     (2) Increasing all levels of civic participation, from knowledge  
18 of current events to regular voting in elections.

19    (c) Methods that the Superintendent of Public Instruction and  
20 the State Board of Education should consider to accomplish the  
21 goals set forth in subdivision (b) may include the following:

22     (1) Developing new curriculum frameworks and, if necessary,  
23 standards that engage pupils in learning about American history  
24 and government by using oral histories, biographical sketches, and  
25 age-appropriate descriptions of heroic efforts on the part of  
26 Americans to build our society and its institutions.

27     (2) Expanding the time devoted to the study of American history  
28 and government and the ~~grades~~ *grade levels* in which that study  
29 is provided.

30     (3) Developing pride in American values, history, and  
31 government through the comparative study of other cultures and  
32 histories.

33     (4) Comparing the success of American society and government  
34 in developing a society governed by the democratically devised  
35 rule of law with societies that, although desiring to be so governed,  
36 have struggled to reach this accomplishment.

37     (5) Incorporating in the curriculum, at age-appropriate levels,  
38 the objective analysis of both historical and modern governmental

1 policies so that pupils may learn to understand the complexity of  
2 many issues, to view them from different perspectives, to consider  
3 evidence, and to reach their own conclusions.

4 (6) Comparing American and Western democracies and histories  
5 to those in other regions of the world, and discussing and  
6 understanding the role that American democracy and society may  
7 play in modern history.

8 (7) Encouraging pupil participation in the voting process,  
9 including volunteering and working at polling places.

10 SEC. 2. ~~Section 51225.6 is added to the Education Code, to~~  
11 ~~read:~~

12 ~~51225.6. Notwithstanding any other law and in addition to~~  
13 ~~other requirements for graduation from high school that are set~~  
14 ~~forth in law or adopted by the governing board of the school~~  
15 ~~district, a pupil shall not receive a diploma of graduation from high~~  
16 ~~school if the pupil, by the time of graduation, does not achieve a~~  
17 ~~score at the basic performance level or above on the grade 11~~  
18 ~~history/social science test that is administered pursuant to the~~  
19 ~~Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, as set forth~~  
20 ~~in Article 4 (commencing with Section 60640) of Chapter 5 of~~  
21 ~~Part 33 of Division 4 of Title 2.~~

22 SEC. 3. ~~If the Commission on State Mandates determines that~~  
23 ~~this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to~~  
24 ~~local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made~~  
25 ~~pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division~~  
26 ~~4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.~~